



A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

פרשת תזריע
פרשת החודש
ר"ח ניסן תשע"ט

HALACHOS OF THE SEDER

All men are invited to join the Kollel for part 2 of a series of shiurim on the Halachos of the Seder night with Rabbi Michoel Stern.

Tuesday 4 Nissan - April 9
8:40-9:30pm in the lunchroom.

MIVTZA HALACHA

Pick up a booklet at the back of the Shule and join the program.

The halachos of the Seder from the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch have been divided up into short daily portions to ensure that you get through them before Pesach this year.

Halachos in English translation are now available.

KASHERING SERVICE

The annual Kollel Menachem Pesach Kasher service will be held this year on Nissan 10 - Monday April 15, from 6:00-8:30pm at the Werdiger Hall kitchen.

YUD ALEF NISSAN

All Anash men are invited to join a community-wide Chassidus learning evening in preparation for Yud Alef Nissan.

Sunday night 9 Nissan, April 14, 8:15-9:30pm in the Glick's cafeteria.

All participants will receive a special gift.



Rabbi Yankel Raskin leads the retirees morning Shulchan Aruch shiur

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The month of redemption

When we count the months of the year we begin from Nissan. But this was not always the case. The Midrash teaches; *When Hashem chose His world, He established for them Rosh Chodesh. When He chose Yaakov and his descendants, he established for them the month of redemption.*

At the outset of Creation, Tishrei was the undisputed start of the year and was established as the first of the months.

But with the first Mitzvah given the Jewish people, when He chose the descendants of Yaakov to be His people, Hashem distinguished us from the Nations. *Hachodesh Hazeh Lachem Rosh Chodashim* - this month (no longer Tishrei, but rather Nissan) will be for you (the Jewish people) the first of months.

The Gemara brings a debate between the Tanaim (Mishnaic sages) concerning when the world was created. Rabbi Eliezer asserts that the world was created in Tishrei. According to Rabbi Yehoshua, the world was created in Nissan.

Based on a Tosfos, the mystics explain that their opinions are not contradictory. Creation and time exist on various levels. Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua differed in their approach as to which plane of creation should be emphasized.

The actual, physical creation of the world took place in Tishrei. But the creation as it arose in Hashem's thought was in Nissan.

The world was created with an express purpose, to actualise Hashem's desire to be revealed and manifest within the finite world and for us to discover Him. This purpose, Hashem's thought, became hidden within the actual creation. Hashem's presence and the G-dly vitality which pervades Creation is hidden and obscured by the veil of nature.

Tishrei reflects the worldly reality of our world, the façade of the natural order. This is how the world was created and how it was to remain until the Jewish people were chosen and entrusted with their first Mitzvah.

From then on, we count from Nissan. As Jews, we are not bound or limited by Creation. Through Torah and Mitzvos and by way of our Neshomo, a part of Hashem

Himself, we are able to transcend the limitations and worldliness of the world.

The month of Nissan is called the month of Geulah, not just because of the liberation from Egypt which took place in Nissan, but because the month itself expresses and embodies the theme of redemption.

What is redemption? The Geulah is a state where the true reality of the world as a manifestation of Hashem will finally be revealed. The limitations of nature will be removed and no longer conceal Hashem's presence.

The Rebbe has taught us that the key to the Geulah is to live the Geulah. Our personal Geulah is the catalyst for the collective Geulah.

In our lives we face many levels of concealment and sources for struggle in actualising our true being - the Neshomo within us which craves a relationship with Hashem and to fulfil His Mitzvos.

Our animalistic soul, the drive of our selfish desires and living for worldly indulgence is one level of obstruction. The hanochos haolom, the worldly perspectives and ways of thinking; how we view society, wealth, the nature of the world and what is truly important is another veil of concealment.

When we express our Neshomo and strive to see the world around us and everything that happens as Hashem's presence, we achieve *Hachodesh Hazeh Lachem Rosh Chodashim*, the experience of Geulah.

1. Pesachim 120a, Rambam Hichos Chametz Umatzah 7:12	7. 473:5
2. Pesachim 39a	8. Beis Yosef 473
3. This is the order quoted in Rif and is found in the Yerushalmi. It is the standard text found in the Mishnayos (as opposed to the Mishna as recorded in the Talmud).	9. 473:30
4. Shulchan Aruch Harav 473:27 quoting Chok Yakov	10. 473:30
5. Rashi understands the Gemara literally, referring to the stalks becoming harder. The Alter Rebbe explains that when the stalks harden, the lettuce becomes more and more bitter, just as the Egyptians started off sweet in their treatment of the Jews only to become bitter in the end	11. Levush 473:5, Chok Yakov 473:17, Chayei Adam 130:3, Rabbi Yakov Emden (Siddur) and Aruch Hashulchan 473:16 and Chacham Tzvi quoted below
6. Rashi	12. Ridbaz on Yerushalmi Brachos chapter 6 and Chazon Ish 124.
	13. Tur and Beis Yosef 473 based on Hagahos Maimonios Hilchos Chametz Umatzah 7:20
	14. Teshuva 119
	15. 473:11
	16. 2:262
	17. 473:26

Is the Maror shortage a halachic concern?

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

The big news in Australia is that there may not be any horseradish available for Pesach, throwing many Balabustas into a state of panic. Below we present a discussion on the preferred vegetable to be used for Maror.

Maror is eaten twice during the Seder. One Kzayis is eaten by itself for Maror and a second Kzayis is eaten together with Matzah for Korech. The Mitzvah Deoraisa of eating Maror only applied when the Korban Pesach was eaten. The obligation to eat Maror now is Mideraban¹.

Five species of Maror

The Mishna² lists 5 species that can be used to fulfil the Mitzvah of Maror; Chazeres, Tamcha, Charchavina, Ulshin and Moror. The Kzayis volume can be made up of a combination of all of these types. An alternate version³ of the Mishna lists the species in a different order; Chazeres, Ulshin, Tamcha, Charchavina and Maror. The sequence in the Mishna has halachic significance, which will be discussed below.

Even though Maror means bitter, our sages explain that the Torah is referring to specific species which are called Maror⁴. The Gemara identifies these species using names that were used in their time. The Rishonim and Acharonim identify the species by the names used in their times. We also find arguments and differences in identification of each of the species.

For the purpose of this article, we will only discuss the 2 species which are commonly used for Maror – Chazeres and Tamcha. The vast majority of Poskim and the accepted identification in both Halacha and practise, identify Chazeres as lettuce and Tamcha as chrein (horseradish). When using lettuce it is customary to use romaine lettuce.

The preferred specie

The Gemara records that Ravina saw Rav Acha son of Rava searching for Merirsa (the specie identified as Maror) to use as Maror, presumably because it is the most bitter. Ravina said that even though it is bitterer, the ideal Mitzvah is to use Chazeres which is listed first in the Mishna.

Rava brings additional proofs why Chazeres is the preferable vegetable. The Gemara identifies Chazeres as Chasa. The word Chasa can mean pity, alluding to how Hashem took pity upon us when He took us out of Mitzrayim.

Further, Rabbi Yonason taught that the Egyptians resemble Maror. Just as Maror at its begin-

ning is soft but in the end it is hard⁵, so too the Egyptians were soft at the beginning but in the end they were harsh. This refers to the Midrash that initially the Egyptians paid the Jewish people for their labour but eventually enslaved them without pay⁶. This refers specifically to Chazeres.

After hearing these proofs, Rav Acha retracted his practise and would use Chazeres.

Whilst the Rambam does not write the ruling of the Ravina that Chazeres is preferable, the Tur rules like Ravina that the preferred Mitzvah is to use Chazeres. This is also the accepted Halacha in Shulchan Aruch⁷. One should give precedence to Chazeres even if it is more costly⁸. The Alter Rebbe⁹ explains that the hiddur of spending additional money to obtain Chazeres is equivalent to spending money on obtaining a Mehudar Esrog.

Lettuce that is not bitter

The Alter Rebbe¹⁰ rules that Chazeres is still the preferred Maror specie, even when it is sweet. Even though Chazeres is not bitter, since if it were left in the ground the stalks would become hard and bitter. It is for this reason that Chazeres is called Maror. The main thing is not to taste bitterness, but to use a specie that is called Maror. This is also the opinion of many other noted Acharonim¹¹.

There are those who argue¹² that one must be able to taste bitterness and therefore should not use lettuce that is not bitter. They rule that one may not use 'sweet' lettuces.

Common practise follows the Poskim who permit sweet lettuce to be used. This is also implied in the Beis Yosef. Rabbi Yakov Emden writes that it is preferable to use lettuce - not like those ignoramuses (בורים) who try to use bitter vegetables.

In the absence of Chazeres, the order of preference follows the order in which the species are listed in the Mishna¹³ (following the 2nd order listed above).

Chacham Tzvi¹⁴ writes that Chazeres is lettuce leaf which is called Salad, which meets all of the criteria described in the Gemara. The custom in Ashkenaz and Poland of using chrein was because Chazeres was not available (or because they were not proficient in the names of the species to be able to identify them). He writes that this creates a problem; since one needs to eat a Kzayis volume of Maror. Since chrein is so strong, people would not be able to eat the required amount.

Using Chrein

The Ba'er Heitev¹⁵ records that the Minhag in Ash-

kenaz was to use Tamcha (chrein). Teshuva Meahava¹⁶ writes that the custom in Prague was to use chrein, since the preferred species of lettuce was not available. The Aruch Hashulchan¹⁷ similarly writes that in their locale, only the ministers has lettuce at that time of year.

Rabbi Akiva Eiger is of the opinion that one should specifically use chrein. Even in a case of illness, he was loathe to follow the Chacham Tzvi who identified Chazeres as lettuce. Many communities have the custom of using chrein. There are many halachic issues discussed concerning the use of chrein for Maror including whether and when it should be grated, if one may eat it in its full strength and whether it can be soaked to weaken its bitterness.

Chabad custom

In the Haggadah directives on setting up the Kaarah, the Alter Rebbe writes that the Chazeres used for Korech is placed below the Maror. Many Haggadahs refer to the Maror used for Korech as Chazeres, to differentiate between it and the Maror eaten earlier on its own.

The Rebbe's Haggada – Likutei Taamim Uminhagim – writes that based on the different names used in the Haggadah, some would use different species for Maror and for Korech, even in a place where lettuce was available. The Rebbe discusses the possible rationale for doing this, but concludes that the preference is to use lettuce for both Maror and for Korech. Indeed, in his Shulchan Aruch when describing the Kaarah, the Alter Rebbe refers to both as Maror – Maror and the Maror for Korech. The different names used in the Haggadah have Kabbalistic significance.

The Rebbe concludes that Chabad custom is to use a combination of both Chazeres (identified as lettuce) and Tamcha (identified as chrein) for both Maror and Korech.

Based on the discussion above, Chazeres (lettuce) is more Mehudar to use for Maror. Adding chrein is a matter of custom (perhaps to have something with a bitter taste even though it is not halachically required). If one can obtain a small amount of chrein to add to the lettuce, it would be good to do so. If chrein is not available, one need not worry.

Note: All lettuce must be thoroughly washed and checked for bugs according to recommended guidelines.

Sources on reverse